

## SHORT NOTE

### The glossohyal and thyroid bone of *Aptornis otidiformes*

The glossohyal, or tongue bone, and thyroid bone of *Aptornis otidiformes* (Owen) are undescribed and so to help with their future recognition and to enable comparisons with other taxa I depict them here (Fig. 1). These specimens were collected during excavations in sediment 10 000-14 000 years old in the Graveyard Honeycomb Hill Cave System, Oparara Valley, Northwest Nelson (Worthy & Mildenhall 1989). They are associated with the specimen S23644 housed in the National Museum of New Zealand, which comprises the atlas, axis and cervicals 3 to 7 of *A. otidiformes*.

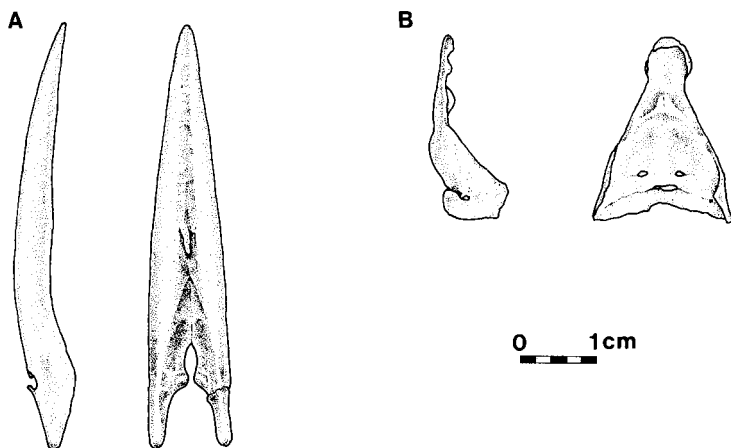


FIGURE 1 — The glossohyal (A) and thyroid bone (B) of *Aptornis otidiformes* in right lateral (left) and dorsal (right of each pair) views

Drawings by Sally Rowe

I am not certain that this association reflects the identity of this thyroid and glossohyal, but because of it and the following, I refer them to *Aptornis*. The thyroid bone is of similar size to those of small moas e.g. *Megalapteryx didinus* (Owen) but is of quite different form; no glossohyal is known for any moa; no bones of *Cnemidornis*, the only other bird of similar size to *Aptornis* likely to be found in inland sites, were recovered from the excavation. The glossohyal is 56.3 mm long and 9.8 mm wide where it bifurcates. The thyroid is 22.6 mm long along the medium line and 17.9 mm wide.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- WORTHY, T. H.; MILDENHALL, D. C. 1989. A late Otiran-Holocene Paleoenvironmental reconstruction based on cave excavations in northwest Nelson, New Zealand. *NZ J. Geol. Geophys.* 32: 243-253.